

ACQUISITION OF PUBLICATIONS FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

It is the policy of the Library of Congress to collect extensively the current publications of the world in all fields of knowledge except clinical medicine and technical agriculture (unless the medical and agricultural publications are issued by national governments). Technical agriculture and clinical medicine are usually excepted because of the comprehensive acquisition programs of our sister institutions, the National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine, whose specialized and extensive collections the Library of Congress does not wish to duplicate.

Traditionally, the Library of Congress has attempted to collect comprehensively the official publications at the national level of foreign governments regardless of subject content.

In addition to the medical and agricultural exceptions, the Library is selective in its acquisition of currently published textbooks, translations, reprints, extracts, and separates. The last three are excluded when the Library's collections contain the serial or other publications in which the material originally appeared.

Non-current publications are acquired selectively. The determining considerations include their availability by gift, exchange, transfer, or purchase; their importance; and, if available only by purchase, their cost. All materials are acquired by one of the following methods: exchange, gift, transfer, purchase, or pursuant to law, including copyright deposit. Administratively, acquisitions matters are handled through two divisions under the direction of the processing department office. All purchases are handled by the order division, and acquisitions by all other means are handled by the exchange and gift division. For the fiscal year 1963 the Library has an appropriation of \$570,000 for the purchase of materials in all fields except law, and to defray expenses such as travel, communication, and bulk-freight charges. An additional appropriation of \$110,000 is available for the purchase of legal materials and to pay miscellaneous expenses. Approximately 68% of the book purchase funds in these two appropriations is spent for foreign acquisitions. Besides the appropriations specifically for the purchase of library materials for its own collections, the Library receives an appropriation to administer acquisitions programs in India, Pakistan and the United Arab Republic for the benefit of other American libraries, as well as itself, pursuant to Public Law 480 (Title I, Section 104 (n)). In fiscal year 1962, \$400,000 was appropriated to establish and operate the programs for six months. In fiscal year 1963, it is expected that the appropriation will provide sufficient funds for annualizing the programs in these countries.

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In 1951 the Library expanded its system of blanket orders for the acquisition of non-serial materials issued outside this country. At the present time there are some 240, approximately half of which are for legal materials. Each blanket order specifies that the holder of the order, who may be a dealer, a university, a United States official at a foreign post or other agent of the Library of Congress, is authorized either to purchase and send current publications in all fields of knowledge with the exceptions which have been mentioned and certain other exceptions which may be peculiar to the area, or to purchase and forward current publications in specific subject fields. In countries where national bibliographies are issued currently the agent is instructed to send by airmail two copies of the current issues, one of which he marks to indicate those titles which are being sent, those titles which he plans to send, and those on which he has questions. When the marked bibliography is received, it is checked by the Library's recommending officers for titles which in their opinion should not have been selected by the blanket order holder and for recommendation of additional titles. This bibliography is then reviewed in the order division for compliance with the terms of the blanket order, for compliance with the Library's acquisitions policies, and for search of the additional recommendations. Appropriate orders are then placed with the dealer and he is advised periodically on his compliance.

For several areas blanket orders are not used by reason of the presence in the Library of area, language, and subject specialists who recommend current titles from national bibliographies, special lists, etc., which in many instances are received by air mail.

The blanket order system has proved to be especially advantageous in acquiring important foreign books automatically and quickly after publication on the basis of actual examination. It has the advantage, too, of insuring receipt of commercial publications which are issued in small editions.

Subscriptions for serials are placed on an individual title basis, not under the blanket order system; but every blanket order holder is requested to send a sample copy of each new serial appearing in his area or subject field. Currently the Library spends about \$220,000 a year on serial continuations for all types of materials in all subject fields.

Exchange has long been the traditional method for the acquisition of official documents, the publications of scientific and learned societies, and those of academic institutions. The Library of Congress is especially fortunate in having available for use in its exchanges (currently some twenty-two thousand) vast quantities of material. These may be categorized as (1) the current official publications of the United States Government (125 copies of each publication excepting confidential matter, blank forms, and circular letters not of a public character-- See 44 United States Code 139 & 139a); (2) the publications of the Library of Congress (although United States official publications, they are generally considered and handled as a separate category); (3) surplus duplicates, and (4) current commercially published American books which are purchased for use in the Library's priced exchange program.

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The Library's exchange arrangements stem from the following sources: (1) the Brussels Convention of 1886; (2) the Executive Agreements concluded on behalf of the United States with foreign nations by the Department of State, in which the Library of Congress is named as the recipient of the foreign documents and is charged with implementing the agreements for the United States; (3) informal agreements concluded by the Library with domestic and foreign institutions and foreign governments with which there are no bases for formal agreements; and (4) priced exchange agreements. The Library's agreements pursuant to the Brussels Conventions and the Executive Agreements encompass currently issued official publications solely; the informal agreements may include current and non-current official and non-official publications, including surplus duplicates; while priced exchange arrangements generally embrace current non-official publications.

To the eleven active "Brusselians" and the forty-seven Executive Agreement countries, and to forty-nine foreign jurisdictions with which there are informal arrangements, the Library sends either a "full set" of documents consisting of about ten thousand pieces printed annually at the United States Government Printing Office or a "partial set" made up of about two thousand pieces a year from the same source. In return the Library expects to receive a comprehensive set of the official publications issued currently by the foreign exchange partners.

Formerly by statute, now under regulations issued pursuant to the Surplus Property Act of 1950, the Library receives annually from other federal libraries in the District of Columbia between one and one-half and two million pieces which are deemed by them to be of no further use to their agencies. About 98 per cent of this material is non-current. As the receipts are reviewed, materials are selected for the Library's collections and for exchange use. The remainder is disposed of by transfer to other federal libraries, by sale to dealers and others, by donation to American public and private educational institutions, and by sale as waste paper, in that order. Because of the quantity of surplus duplicates available for exchange use, no attempt is made to list them. Exchange partners are asked to indicate subject fields of interest and the exchange assistants select titles for them within these fields.

Exchange matters are handled by four sections of the exchange and gift division: the American and British exchange section, the European exchange section, the Orientalia exchange section, and the Hispanic exchange section. These sections are organized on a geographical and language basis, and the staff of each section works with exchange relations occurring in the area assigned to it.

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Under this division of responsibilities, the exchange staff may explore the possibilities of acquiring materials desired by the Library in their respective areas beyond the mere acceptance or rejection of exchange offers. Each section head is responsible for conducting a country-by-country survey within his area of operation to determine the existence of scientific and learned societies and academic institutions, to discover the publications of these cultural bodies, to determine those publications which the Library receives, to ascertain from the recommending and selection officers the desirability of acquiring those not received by the Library and to attempt to acquire by exchange those desired for addition to the collections. This survey responsibility extends also to the review of foreign governmental agencies to determine whether needed official publications may be acquired under existing agreements or whether new documents-exchange agreements should be concluded. In all these activities the advice and assistance of the various divisions of the reference department and the law library play a tremendously important role. The Library is especially fortunate in being able to call upon the Department of State and the United States Information Agency, including their posts abroad, for aid and information in its exchange and purchase programs.

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